

Message Text

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64

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00

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INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

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TAGS: PINT, YO

SUBJECT: ZAGREB PRESS ATTACKS ARCHBISHOP OF RIJEKA-SENJ FOR
MEETINGS WITH "USTASHI" LEADERS ABROAD

SUMMARY: THE ZAGREB PRESS HAS PROMINENTLY ATTACKED THE ARCHBISHOP OF RIJEKA-SENJ DIOCESE, JOSIP PAVLISIC, FOR MEETING WITH "USTASHI" LEADERS DURING A TRIP LAST YEAR TO ARGENTINA, CANADA, AND THE US. THE ARTICLES ACCUSE THE ARCHBISHOP OF WORKING AGAINST YUGOSLAVIA AND SUGGEST HIS REMOVAL BY CHURCH AUTHORITIES. END SUMMARY

1. THE APRIL 2 EDITION OF THE ZAGREB WEEKLY "VJESNIK U SRIJEDU" (VUS) HAS A FULL-PAGE ARTICLE ATTACKING ARCHBISHOP JOSIP PAVLISIC FOR MEETING PUBLICLY WITH NUMEROUS "USTASHI" LEADERS AND FORMER OFFICIALS OF THE WARTIME INDEPENDENT STATE OF CROATIA (NDH) DURING A TRIP TO ARGENTINA, CANADA, AND THE US IN OCTOBER AND NOVEMBER 1974. THE STORY, WHICH APPEARS TO BE BASED MAINLY ON REPORTS FROM THE BUENOS AIRES CROATIAN EMIGRE JOURNAL "OGNJISTE," IS ALSO SUMMARIZED IN THE MARCH 31 EDITIONS OF THE ZAGREB DAILIES "VJESNIK" AND "VERCERNI LIST."

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2. THE "VUS" ARTICLE FOCUSES ON ARCHBISHOP PAVLISIC'S ACTIVITIES

IN ARGENTINA, WHERE HE IS ACCUSED OF MEETING, AMONG OTHERS, LINO PEDISIC, A PRIEST ACTIVE IN THE EMIGRE ORGANIZATION CROATIAN LIBERATION MOVEMENT AND WHO REPUTEDLY SIGNED A "USTASHI" MEMORANDUM TO PRESIDENT EISENHOWER AND "EXTOLLED" THE DECISION OF FORMER GOVERNOR REGAN TO PROCLAIM APRIL 10 THE DAY OF CALIFORNIA CROATS; DANIJEL CRLJEN, DESCRIBED AS THE "USTASHI GOEBBELS" AND A FORMER NDH LEADER OF DALMATIA AND THE LIKA; IVICA FRKOVIC, FORMER MINISTER IN THE NDH; AND IVAN WERNER, SON OF FORMER NDH CHIEF OF ZAGREB.

3. WHILE IN NEW YORK, THE ARCHBISHOP REPORTEDLY MET WITH "USTASHI" EMIGRES, INCLUDING ANTE DOSEN, PRESIDENT OF THE CROATIAN NATIONAL COUNCIL AND DESCRIBED AS ACTIVE IN ORGANIZING AND GATHERING CONTRIBUTIONS FOR TERRORIST ACTS; MARIJAN GABELICA, DESCRIBED AS AN ORGANIZER OF TERRORIST ACTS; AND MIROSLAV GAL, PREWAR "USTASHI" ACTIVIST AND A FOUNDER OF THE ORGANIZATION UNITED CROATS OF AMERICA; AND BOGDAN RADIC, CALLED ONE OF THE MOST ACTIVE ORGANIZERS OF HOSTILE WORK AGAINST YUGOSLAVIA. PAVLISIC REPORTEDLY ALSO VISITED CLEVELAND AND YOUNGSTOWN, WHERE HE MET WITH THE "WELL-KNOWN POLITICAL EMIGRE" FATHER ANTUN LIVAJUSICA.

4. "VUS" DOES NOT MENTION ANY EXPLICIT ANTI-REGIME REMARKS BY ARCHBISHOP PAVLISIC. HOWEVER, "VUS" ACCUSES THE ARCHBISHOP OF "DANCING TO THE 'USTASHI' TUNE" AND OF WORKING JOINTLY WITH THE "USTASHI" AGAINST YUGOSLAVIA. ACCORDING TO "VUS," THE ARCHBISHOP'S REMARKS CAN ONLY BE UNDERSTOOD AS AN ENCOURAGEMENT TO THE "HOSTILE ACTIVITY OF THE EXTREMIST CROATIAN EMIGRATION." "VUS" ASKS RHETORICALLY WHETHER SUCH ACTS ARE NOT LEGALLY PUNISHABLE.

5. "VUS" ALSO CLAIMS THAT THE ARCHBISHOP'S ACTIONS ARE A VIOLATION OF THE "PROTOCOL" BETWEEN THE VATICAN AND THE YUGOSLAV GOVERNMENT AND AN IMPEDIMENT TO VATICAN EFFORTS TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH YUGOSLAVIA. ACCORDING TO "VUS," PAVLISIC'S "POLITICAL ATTACK" SHOULD CAUSE THE VATICAN TO CONSIDER HIS "SUITABILITY" FOR A HIGH POSITION IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH OF YUGOSLAVIA. THE "VUS" ARTICLE ATTEMPTS TO MAKE A DISTINCTION BETWEEN PAVLISIC AND THE CROATIAN CHURCH HIERARCHY BY QUESTIONING WHETHER THE CHURCH LEADERSHIP KNEW ABOUT THE ARCHBISHOP'S ACTIVITIES DURING HIS JOURNEY TO THE NEW WORLD.

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6. COMMENT: BY EMPHASIZING THAT PAVLISIC'S ACTIONS ARE CONTRARY TO THE CHURCH'S OWN RULES AND BEST INTERESTS, THE "VUS" ARTICLE SEEMS DESIGNED TO INDUCE THE CHURCH TO REMOVE PAVLISIC FROM HIS POSITION; AN ACT WHICH WOULD SAVE THE GOVERNMENT THE PROBLEM OF HAVING TO MOVE AGAINST PAVLISIC ITSELF. THE "VUS" ARTICLE WILL FORCE THE CROATIAN CHURCH TO TAKE A PUBLIC POSITION ON THE PAVLISIC ISSUE, MOST PROBABLY IN THE PAGES OF

"GLAS KONCILA" WHICH "VUS" CRITICIZED FOR ITS SILENCE ABOUT
PAVLISIC'S TRAVELS.
KAISER

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